بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

THE WAY OF THE DISCIPLE

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Contents

1. Intention & Purpose....7
2. Aspiration & Drive....7
3. "The Titanic Struggle"....8
4. "Fire Dragons"....9
5. Worth, Will and Readiness....9
6. Parasites & Blood Suckers....10
7. Wear & Gear....11
8. Ornaments....12
9. Footwear....13
10. Your Teacher....13
11. Dos and Don'ts With Your Teacher....14
12. "Real Teachers"....14
13. Your Books....16
14. Memory & Memorization....22
15. Travelling & Touring....24
16. How to Properly Sit in a Circle of Knowledge....29
17. Seeking a Field of Expertise:....32
18. Taking on an Apprentice and Adopting a Disciple....38

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Know for sure,
the art of studying is of
vital importance to the
knowledge seeker.

It is a road of either success
in your studies or failure.

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1. Intention & Purpose

The whole purpose of your studies should be to gain and benefit.

Firstly, the gain and benefit of your own soul; gaining knowledge and awareness of Allah's rights upon you as a servant, benefitting happiness and inner peace in this life and eternal bliss in the Hereafter. Secondly, you must intend to help those around you, your family, friends, associates, neighbours, co-workers, employees and employers. This is done by educating them, reminding them and making them aware of Allah's right upon them.

2. Aspiration & Drive

Reach for the stars, the sky is the limit. The great scholars and Imams were men and women, humans and servants of Allah. With His permission, you can obtain what they obtained, if not greater.

Have a goal, every day, every week, every month, every year. After the passing of two, five then ten years, the self must be evaluated.

This drive is a gift from Allah which He must be begged for during the wee hours of the night, in *sujood*, at the time of rain etc.

Read the biographies of the great masters of hadith; travel with them upon the humped backs of camels, barges and canoes. Walk in their sandals across the scorching sands and hilly terrains. Experience their joy, bear their suffering, taste the bitter sacrifice. From Hijaz to Nishapur, travel with the masters.

Wish to reach the status of your teacher and much more, accompany those who are stronger and more powerful, be inspired by them, pushed and motivated, but never deem yourself inferior and weak.

3. "The Titanic Struggle"

How does one balance between pure intentions for the sake of Allah and excellence in seeking knowledge and mastery of the Islamic sciences? How does one maintain humbleness and lack of self worth and high standard of quality in learning and teaching Islam? This is the great struggle that each and

every student of knowledge must face. The battlefield is your heart and mind, the weapon being your conscience. Allah's help must be sought.

4. "Fire Dragons"

Self-doubt, poor confidence, lack of self-esteem, and fear of un-precedented greatness. Leaving your friends and the norm of nothingness and average life to the new and high plateau of *ilm*. Often, our insecurities are our worst adversaries. Never be afraid of excelling and living out what was predestined for you.

5. Worth, Will and Readiness

Nothing is more precious than knowledge, nothing more sacred in our times than true understanding and pure wisdom. But are you worthy? Do you deserve it? What have you done to deserve this immeasurable blessing? As I write this book, the true answers to these questions I have not found.
Allah, our Lord, is Most Kind.

Know that Allah has chosen you for knowledge! What will you do? What do you have the power to do? Nothing less than a will of iron is needed, nothing short than the readiness of a soaring eagle is required.

Hesitation will ruin your limited window of opportunity, trust in Allah must be placed at once. Being chosen for this art, immediately embark upon its path. Would you hesitate in taking a gem handed to you?

6. *Parasites & Blood Suckers*

In other words: attachments and distractions. Things, people, places, activities and habits which at best weaken your focus and concentration upon seeking knowledge, or at worst kill it – rendering your chances of success to a flatline. Before you take off for flight, things must be removed and placed behind you. This is just like a fly that lands upon an open wound, sucking the blood, delaying recovery – rather causing infection. How more vivid of a description could you want?

7. Wear & Gear

Take care of your physical appearance without taking care of it. Look presentable and handsome but leave some space for a bit of grit and ruggedness. You are wielding knowledge and representing the religion, and not walking down a runway nor standing in a storefront window. There is no room for stains and wrinkles; but too much time consumed in front of a mirror is ruinous to the art of studying. Be classic, keep up with modern times, allow yourself to be unique. Nevertheless, you shouldn't stand out unnecessarily.

For male disciples, the head should always be covered in public places. Pure white is the most excellent colour to be worn. Female disciples should always be caught in the most modest and covering garments; examples must be made, standards must be satisfied, orthodox tradition must be upheld.

You must never leave your home with no less than three writing instruments. I personally prefer three: two fountain pens and one trusty ballpoint; king blue and violet colored ink is very pleasing to the eye. No.2 pencils and old-

fashioned erasers will serve you well. You must ponder deeply on this one!
One pocket journal in the right side, one small cashier in the left and a pocket-sized book as well. There will be traffic, standing in the glare of the sun, places in which electronics are not allowed, never be caught without some materials to read!

Since Allah has sworn by time, al-Asr, in His Glorious Book, the knowledge seeker respects and values time immensely. Your place of rest and study must be filled with high quality time devices. Whether a traditional clock on the wall or the ancient sand filled hourglass, just make sure you keep a close and accurate track of time. As for personal time keeping, I personally prefer the pocket watch. [1] It is sturdy, elegant, classy and classically unique. Elgin's, Waltham's and South Bend's galore! Alarms must be loud and annoying – disturbingly loud.

8. Ornaments

[1] This was written before I reverted to wearing the wrist watch.

Your main ornament should either be a large book – the thicker the better – or a dependable tablet, carrying for you no less than 1,000 books and articles. This must be researched.

9. Footwear

Footwear should be comfortable, casual, studious and flexible enough to appropriately suit the needed situation. It must be sturdy for working long distances and quick sprints, if necessary.

10. Your Teacher

Ask Allah to provide you with much more than just a teacher. Beg Ar-Rahman for a role model, a guide, a cultivating nurturer; someone pious and composed, someone who is learned and experienced; one who has been properly taught and trained, one who is well known and well reputed; someone who takes their religion seriously; one in love with knowledge, not just one who loves it!

This cannot be fully explained in words.

11. Dos and Don'ts with Your Teacher

Often, the knowledge seeker is faced with a serious problem and major challenge. The teacher is one's friend or colleague. This is an issue! Stuck and trapped between two conflicting worlds, laughing and joking, calling him by his first name, time being spent on companionship instead of gaining raw knowledge.

In many cases, the seeker doesn't have a choice, nor am I denying some pros and benefits in having both a teacher/mentor and a friend. To all things there is balance. Know the ledge.

12. "Real Teachers"

In reality, your teacher shouldn't "teach" you anything. Instead, he should direct and instruct, guide and inspire. He should instill confidence and drive in the mind of his pupil. The most important job of the teacher is to place log after log into the furnace of passion

for seeking knowledge and the spark of aspiration that must eventually lead to a great blaze; if not, the master has surely failed. Furthermore, a failed apprentice means a foolish master.

Placing the learner on "the path" is far more everlasting than the act of merely handing him pieces of information and facts. Developing the mind and personality of the learner, teaching to develop his/her own way and style is more impactful. Avoid producing a clone.

Show your students how to read and write properly, how to conduct scientific research, instruct them in the skill of debate and knowledge-based arguments. Encourage them to write and author. Train them in the lost technique of discipline.

Of course, all this is done after a solid foundation has been laid down; a slab of granite, years of training and cultivating; rivers do flow to their set measures.

This doesn't mean that you shouldn't aspire to learn actual knowledge from your teacher. He

may give you information, explain classical texts and be your role model.

A true teacher is he who implements his knowledge, leads by example and exists for the good of his pupils.

13. Your Books

A disciple's greatest weapon, his most prized possession, a disciple's closest and most trusted friend and confidant are his books. They are the greatest thing you can accumulate and amass. One must spend all his wealth on building and maintaining the library; mother books, staple titles, rare collections and works out of print on mahogany shelves, teak drawers, jacaranda tables, etc.

Creating and building your library will take both instruction and time.
All things are difficult at first.

There are four main schools of establishing one's personal reading chamber:

1. Purchasing only the books that you have the time, ability and desire to read; only

those that are helpful and interesting now. In laymen terms: like/need a book, buy a book, and there you go.

2. Buying the mainstay work in each genre. Once you have at least one staple work for each section, you move on to the next level, so on and so forth.
3. Purchasing the easiest and simplest books in each genre and then gradually moving up to the classical mainstays.
4. Focusing on one genre at a time until one has bought most, if not all major and minor works of the genre, then moving on to the next section.

You must read for hours every day. You and your books must become one. You must read because you must, because you want to, because one book opens the door to 1,000 other books. When, without something in your hand to read, you don't experience pain, like a fish out of the water, you need to find another profession. Study this!

The greater diversity you have in your reading, the sharper your mind will become, the more thorough your comprehension, the easier it will be to deduce and extract the secret

benefits from your chosen field of study. This ability does not come easily. Study hard!

Never fall asleep at night before reading. As soon as you have finished your *adhkar*, turn on your book light, fall asleep with your book and book light on your face.

Keep your book beneath your pillow. Upon waking up and reciting the appropriate supplications, recommence your reading. Indeed, this is apart of thanking Allah for returning to you your soul.

Bookmarks, highlighters, and sticky notes are useful. In a separate notebook, write down the *fawa'id* which interest you the most. Underline that which you have a problem understanding, jot down ideas, explanatory notes, but never write the English definition of unknown vocabulary words. One must force himself to memorize those. Bravery is a must!

Learn how to summarize a book. Condense it, record the typos and printing errors, place in the margins and borders for your own benefits and commentary.

Upon buying a new book, the tradition is to:

1. Record the time, place, and location of purchase.
2. Read the entire introduction.
3. Peruse through the entire table of contents.
4. Skim through the entire book.
5. Once you get home, immediately stamp the first three pages of the book.

Be mindful of lending books. Be careful! Never lend out a book that isn't stamped!

Personal Stamps:

I prefer to have at least three stamps:

1. One classic wooden stamp
2. One modern mechanical stamp
3. One traditional metal stamp for melted wax sealing. You must research this.

The contents of the stamp should include:

1. Your *kunya* (by-name)
2. First name
3. Last name

4. Ascription of your country
5. Something meaningful and symbolic; whether it be a glorious Quranic verse, an honorable prophetic hadith, a wise quote or traditional slogan.

There are countless styles for your stamps, endless variations of shapes and decoration; circular, square, rectangular, floral pattern shields, and decorative ovals. Any colour ink will do. I personally prefer violet.
You must find yourself.

The public library should be your second home, commercial bookstores your third, used books your first! You must develop a knack for good books and good authors, as well as hone and sharpen your natural ability to do so.

Eventually you will polish these abilities as is the case with all other aspects of seeking knowledge.

Necessary and Recommended Reads on the *Talab* Culture:

1. *Kitab al-'Ilm* – Ibn Abi Khaythamah
2. *Akhlaq al-'Ulema* – Abu Baker al-Ajuree

3. *Jami Bayan al-'Ilm wa Fadlihi* – Ibn 'Abdul-Barr
4. *Al-Jami li Akhlaq ar-Rawi wa 'Adab as-Sami'*- Al Khateeb al-Baghdadi
5. *Sharaf Ashabil- Hadith* – Al Khatib al-Baghdadi
6. *Al-Faqih wal-Mutafaqqih* – Al Khateeb al-Baghdadi
7. *Iqtida al-'Ilm wal-'Amal* – Al Khateeb al-Baghdadi
8. *Adab al-'Alim wal'Muta'llim* – An-Nawawi
9. *At-Tibyan* – An-Nawawi
10. *Tadhkiratus-Saami' wal-Mutakallim* – Ibn Jamaa'ah
11. *Fadl 'Ilm as-Salaf* – Ibn Rajab al-Hanbalee
12. *Zaghl al-'Ilm*- Hafidh adh-Dhahabi
13. *Hilyah Talabil-'Ilm* – Bakr Abu Zayd
14. *Kitab al-'Ilm* – Ibn Uthaymeen
15. *An-Nubadh fi Talabil-'Ilm* – Hamad Ibn Ibrahim
16. *'Awaiq at-Talab* – Abdus-Salam al-Barjas
17. *Ma'alim fi Tariq Talabil-'Ilm* – Abdul-'Azeez Sadhaan

And many, many more…

14. Memory & Memorization

The ability to memorize, i.e., to see something, hear something, experience a taste, a touch, a smell and then store it in your mind is one of the greatest God-given gifts that man has come to know of and acknowledge. To retain and perceive thousands upon thousands of names, dates, locations, feelings and melodies, and call upon them, summoning them to arise before your eyes or to place upon paper is a stunning feature of the human being's performance.

Memory Power is of two kinds:

1. Raw, or natural memory power.
2. Earned, or acquired memory power.

As for the first type or kind, that is something you're either born with or not. Like any other talents, man has nothing to do with it, no hand in it whatsoever; one must be thankful. As much as it is a blessing it can sometimes be a "curse". There are maybe things you may not wish to memorize, flaws, defects, and

blemishes you wish you didn't notice and scars you wish didn't remain in your head. We cannot pick and choose what Allah gives us.

Having this natural power of memory is not license to be laid back, to lazily rely upon it without studying hard and constantly practicing.

As for the second type, then it must be noted that everyone is born with some level of natural memory power, some more than others. However, what is meant by natural memory power is the overwhelming natural ability, the talent that cannot be taught and inserted, only developed and enhanced. Do not be discouraged if you have the second type or the first. Just like a muscle you will have to develop your mind and with the help of Allah, you can become strong and have a formidable memory. Everything depends on how hard you're willing to work. Even without a very powerful memory, it doesn't mean that you cannot be a serious student of knowledge. True understanding based on countless hours of research, meticulous study, penetrating wisdom and piercing intelligence will always

overpower sheer memorization of information and data.
Seek Allah's help, seek Allah's help!

15. Travelling & Touring

Without leaving your home and embarking upon the backs of beasts, boards and nails of boats, or the seats of airbuses, one can never achieve total mastery of *'ilm*.

Countless benefits you will gain upon travelling to seek knowledge, all of them cannot be fully expressed by my pen. You must research yourself. You get the chance to experience the breathtaking beauty and serene spender of Allah's creation. Travelling forces, breeds and encourages bravery, discipline, patience and gratitude. Travelling helps the fluidity of the mind, fights its narrowness and its bluntness. You can truly see the extent of Allah's blessing upon you, and where you truly stand in knowledge and practice of your religion. You get to see the sad and bitter reality of the strangeness of the sunnah; one experiences sadness and yet happiness at the same time. Ponder upon this deeply.

From one aspect we say: Do not think of travelling abroad until after you have taken advantage of all possible available avenues to learn and seek knowledge in your own town, city, state, province, and country. From another aspect, we say take advantage of the golden opportunity of youth, strength, free time, wealth, and life of the scholars. One must aspire, wish and want more. Leaving your home and travelling to seek knowledge fuels this fire and satisfies this thirst.

For one to foolishly think that he/she will be an average Muslim, a "9-5"
Muslim without any type of formal studies, any healthy study habits, never reading and listening, never memorizing and reviewing in one's home country and then travel and instantly mutate into this "studious savage beast" who devours books and spends hours each night writing notes and boycotts his bed in order to memorize hadiths, is clearly deluded and living in a terrible fantasy land. You must wake up or be woken up.

The striking of balance is to take full advantage of all available means in the comfort of one's own homeland. To use the internet, download

lectures, study, benefit from the scholars and students of knowledge where you are, and to save your money, make plans, apply to the universities abroad and dream for the day in which you will be blessed and chosen by Allah to travel to the sacred and holy lands, the ancient dirt and classical sands *'ilm*. What's important is that the serious seeker is serious wherever he/she is, and will only become more serious when abroad. This does not mean that everyone who lives overseas is a student of knowledge, nor that everyone who lives in the western countries isn't a student of knowledge. You must seek the reality of my words.

Besides meeting seekers such as yourself from around the world, scholars of greatness, and living amongst the Muslims, your gain from travelling will bear immeasurable benefits and priceless lessons of sacrifice.

Furthermore, you become far and remote from the distraction of the three deadly *F's*:

1. Friends
2. Family
3. Familiarity

This only applies to those who are not slaves and junkies of social media and its endless snares and traps.
Beg Allah for insight.

Don't think that there is one country, centre, university, or camp that contains all virtues and is free from all vice. There is no such thing as a perfect place, a total and absolute utopia. Rather, this exists in the minds, stained by propaganda. Yes, there are centres that offer training and courses in most, if not, all the traditional sciences and arts, there are strengths and specialties in every center. It is not the move, but instead the movement.
You must ponder on this deeply.

If one were to ask, 'how long should I remain abroad and when should I end my travelling in search for knowledge?' I certainly wouldn't be able to give a convincing answer. There is no limit. This path is forever and there is no limit for its embarking. One may be able to come to a reasonable conclusion by looking at how great the need is for him in his homeland, his family, his town and city. One may be able to answer this question by asking himself:

Have I mastered the basics? Is my foundation solid and concrete? How much have I memorized? Is my character and conduct inline with that of teachers and instructors? Have I properly armed myself for 'hand to hand combat'? How many books have I read, and most importantly, how well have I been trained and prepared? How thoroughly have I been evaluated?

There is no such thing as 'too much knowledge', 'too much studying', or 'you've been gone for too long'. No, these are merely idle words of those who haven't smelled the fragrance of true knowledge, nor experienced its potent 'intoxication'.

What's important is that you seek help and guidance from Allah, then from your teachers and instructors, then from your trusted friends and comrades; those who envy you not. A serious gauging question is: If I leave tomorrow, do I have the necessary skill sets to continue my studies on my own? To deduct my own scientific research? Have I at least finished my basic training, completed the program or graduated from the college? Do not leave without a basic standard!

As far as your plans upon returning, what to teach and what not to teach. Employment, marriage, online master's degrees, PhD's etc., that must be explained in another manual.

Whilst overseas and abroad, make sure you pay close attention and learn well, cherish each moment. Those golden days shall never return, you'll miss that chapter in the circle of your life one day.

16. How to Properly Sit in a Circle of Knowledge

The first thing that should be on your checklist is to correct and purify your intentions. 'I'm going to attend this circle for beneficial knowledge and beneficial knowledge only'. You must look in the mirror and tell yourself before attendance, seeing your friends, brothers and/or sisters, classmates, enjoying the company of your teacher, and so on, are only side benefits that you will reap as a result of your sincerity and hard work and as a small piece of reward that awaits the believer in the Hereafter.

Surely, seeking knowledge isn't a fashion show, but one should take care of his hygiene and appearance. Surely Allah loves beauty and cleanliness.

One should wash or shower, put on deodorant; men should wear oil and/or cologne, but not our sisters (outside of the home at least). Toothbrushes, miswaks and floss should all be employed. Mouthwash and any other form of dental hygiene is requested.

Make sure your garments are clean and pressed. White garment is excellent indeed for the male seeker. The head should be covered. Do not run or rush to the circle. If it is held in the masjid or *musalla*, follow the sunnah and offer two *rak'aat* before sitting.

Upon approaching the circle, if it hasn't yet begun, you may give your colleagues salutations, shaking their hands, asking how they are, gently smiling but beware of idle speech, inappropriate joking and wasting time. If the circle has already begun, give salutation in an audible voice if the circle is small, as far as a large circle, then only give

salams in a low voice, loud enough for your neighbour to hear you, if you choose.

Know when to take notes and when to drop your pen, listen and pay attention. Learn when to ask a question and when not to. If and when you wish to ask your teacher a question, then make sure you do so by raising your right hand. If you're looking for a set of fixed rules set in stone, surely you're in the wrong place. Every shaykh is different, each instructor varies, each circle has its own style. Yes, there are general rules, much of which we have previously mentioned, however, you will have to discover the likes and dislikes of your teachers and your classes. Think hard; you must focus!

Some points you will pick up by paying attention and observation, others by asking questions. Know for sure that proper etiquette in seeking knowledge has long been forgotten and abandoned, at least much of it; endow yourself with the honour of reviving the old ways.

17. Seeking a Field of Expertise:

An absolute necessity, if one wishes to establish a respectable center for learning and research. In these later times of ours, however, it is difficult, something of a rarity. Because knowledge has become so scarce and rare, especially in western countries, one often finds himself at a need to act as a 'super-store', a Walmart - a one stop shop for everything - without a main specialty. Instead, become a general acceptable standard, fulfilling the needs of all Islamic sciences. This isn't necessarily a bad thing, nor a vice; that is not what is intended. There isn't anything wrong with a student of knowledge being well-balanced, well rounded in the traditional sciences, having read a few basics, having taken a series of intermediate courses in most fields and participated in several intensive workshops; that's fine. Often, that is what's needed and sometimes one has no second option. A graduate may be in a location and or a time in which he must play every role and manage each slot. But this can only be temporary, nothing but a mandatory bandage on a wound that requires immediate attention

and medical care. This can never be the long-term goal or considered a step towards the establishment of something serious and honourable. The exceptions to this are the real experts, existing in a realm and this 'do it all Imam' in another, and they simultaneously work together and cooperate. If you wish to build an institute, erect a university, actually raising the bar and creating a tangible legacy for forthcoming generations, then many 'true masters' are needed. It is possible to commence with a single 'true master' only if he/she is willing and capable of duplicating him/herself – extending themselves to provide all necessities the center may have. You must research this deeply.

When there are three or four students of knowledge who have varying fields of expertise and spheres of mastery all working together, beneath one banner, behind the guidance and leadership of one wise and strong general, the army will be unstoppable. Hospitals, law firms, major hotels and resorts, all the armed forces, Ivy League schools, and championship sports teams all understand and uphold the laws of role and expertise. That is why they enjoy what they enjoy of success.

One holds a PhD in *tafsir*, another is a gifted reciter of Quran who can easily shift the gears from one mode of *qira'ah* to another, a third has a master's degree in *fiqh*; one sister is a poet, her aunt is a professor of Arabic and her husband, of course, a hadith specialist, and so on and so forth. None of them win individually, but collectively they produce great results.

Once you have locked down the basics and have become well rounded and balanced in the auxiliary sciences, primary fields of study, and organic matters of knowledge, you should pursue a field of expertise. Life is short, your energy limited; knowledge is an ever-expansive sea of limitlessness. Hadith alone is an abyss which knows no end and gives itself in full to no one, no matter how sincere, how dedicated, how hard working – it refuses to be encompassed by one weak mortal. Many men and women have become 'Hadith masters', but no one has ever become 'Master of Hadith'. Ponder on this immensely.

How do I Seek a Field of Expertise / How do I Become a True Master?

The path to mastery of specific field of expertise and particular art form is to first select one. The guidelines for it should be as follows:

1. Your desires
2. Your capability
3. Availability
4. Needs & necessity

This is in order of significance – from first to last.

After asking Allah for divine inspiration and guidance – as is our habit in all affairs and matters – investigate your personality and demeanour. What type of guy are you? What type of gal are you? What is your nature like? What are your hobbies, pastimes, and interests? What are your natural strengths and weaknesses? What was your favourite subject throughout school? What branch of Islamic studies appeals to you the most; which tastes the sweetest to you?

What seems to be the most realistic and the most practical for you to master? Of course, you must be careful in balancing between your

dreams and practical reality. Aspirations that are high must be set apart from illusion and drunkenness. Use your mind well.

What resources are available? Which masters of this art and experts of this field are alive and accessible, and most importantly accepting disciples? What has been written on the topic? Starting your list with the classic works, all the way down to the modern titles.

Once I choose to devote the rest of my life on this earth to my chosen art, how will it benefit me, my people, my country, my land and my generation? All of these are necessary questions. However, one may devote himself to a set of broad principles and specific techniques not for the people but for oneself. You must research this.

Once these questions have been honestly asked and answered, let there be no hesitation, no shuddering of the foot, no stammering of the tongue, put your trust in Allah, and move forward. A warrior must not hesitate.

All your time and energy must be then set and applied to reaching the highest point possible

in your desired field of expertise. Try your best in exerting all efforts in learning the most interesting subtleties of your chosen art. Avoid being a surface dweller, instead scratch beneath the surface and be one who delves and dwells the depths. You have to get your hands dirty with the oldest of all classic works you can find, manuscripts, prints, manuals, and manifestos of all sorts. Spend the least amount of time possible on the other fields besides your expertise. All of this is done according to the best of your ability whilst fulfilling your other Islamic duties and obligations such as khutbahs, classes, answering people's questions etc.

Contact and correspond with your fellow practitioners and specialists. Meet with them, share with them and benefit one another. Debate them, fight them, beat them!

You cannot deem yourself thankful to Allah first and foremost, then to those who preceded you if you yourself do not continue the tradition and uphold the legacy of contributing to the dynasty and expanding the empire.

Your pen must hit the pad, your keyboard must become faded, pencil shavings and ink cartridges should cover your floor in an utter mess. Writing and authoring is key to the survival of the great Hadith culture. Where would you be today if the ancients were stingy?

Document your personal experiences. Record your own thoughts and views. Compile, rearrange and analyze what the Imams of the past said and did. So much has been written on the topic of hadith, so much service has been done, yet so much remains – let alone what needs to be revived and resurrected. It is said that a book gently weeps as it sits upon the shelf and grows old collecting dust. Allah surely knows.

18. Taking on an Apprentice and Adopting a Disciple

Seek Allah's help, be patient, be particular and careful, but it must be done. Just like writing is vital to the survival of hadith, adopting a pupil is just as important, if not more.

Much knowledge cannot be found between pages and leather, but instead only in one's heart, having been passed down for generations; master to apprentice, teacher to student and senior disciple to junior disciple. Strong, dedicated and loyal disciples is how knowledge grows, expands and survives the brutal conflicts of this cold world. By Allah's permission, your legacy will be upheld and shown to the continents and its lands by your students. Train them well.

Things to Look for When Picking Disciples:

There are necessary staple qualities and then there are 'extras'; there is good, there is great, and there is elite. You must ponder deeply on this.

The Necessary:

1. Faithfulness
2. Loyalty
3. Intelligence
4. Good health
5. Physical strength
6. Eagerness to learn

7. Ability to learn
8. Discretion
9. Ability to remain silent
10. Intuition and initiative
11. An empty cup
12. Courage

Extras:

1. High level of intelligence
2. Sharp wit
3. Fast speech and sharp tongue
4. Youth
5. Good physical appearance
6. Basic training
7. Throughout family background
8. Secular educational background
9. Similar interests, taste and hobbies

Allah surely knows best.

The bond between master and apprentice, teacher and student, is supposed to be the strongest; their relationship is the most intimate, their friendship and trust the most sacred.

One cannot be considered a master of anyone until he has mastered himself. You must discover this on your own.

The pupil must work, must sacrifice, sweat and suffer before he/she is to be taught anything. If someone is unwilling to do manual chores, be punctual and hardworking in these things, then what will they do with Sahih al-Bukhari?!

They must prove their worth and worthiness. They must never ever forget that their being your student is a gift from Allah, and then a debt which they can never repay you for.

It isn't necessarily for you to choose who will or will not be your disciple, but instead those whom Allah brings you, you must be pleased with and accept your fate. Of course, this doesn't mean that you should be negligent and careless, ignoring the guidelines that we have previously mentioned. That is not the intended meaning.

Once they have proven their worth and eligibility, teach them all you know, give them

time, attention and care; they are the future, knowledge will live forever, you will not.

Teach them the small things before the big, the baby books before the big boy books. Respect your students, treat them kindly, treat them justly, but never equal. Justice is a thing, equality is another. Think deeply.
Those who are more talented, more devoted, more respectful, hungrier, deserve more. It's unfair to hold back the advanced because of the slow; they're all one, your students, your brothers and sisters in Islam, however, the bloodline must remain strong.
With Allah help is sought.

The more progress and promise that is shown, the more secrets you teach them, the more you should ween them from you and your teachings. This cannot be fully expressed in words.

Always instil in them the dire necessity of them practicing and sparring on their own, furthering their trail. Constantly teach them that when they graduate from beneath your chair and leave your 'dojo'; their studies have only begun. No matter how far away from you

they go, no matter how many years pass by, you will always be connected to them.

With Allah is all success.